

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A sanitary gasket for use between two pipes, each having a plurality of ferrule faces defining a channel thereon, the sanitary gasket comprising:

5 - a spacing assembly, having a spacing member including a body having an inner edge and an outer edge; and

- a gasket assembly having a spacing assembly interfacing edge associated with the inner edge of the spacing assembly,

10 -wherein the gasket assembly is of a softer material than the spacing assembly, such that, upon clamping, the spacing assembly controls the spacing between two pipes, and, in turn, the compression of the gasket assembly.

2. The sanitary gasket of claim 1 wherein the spacing assembly further comprises a positioning member associated with the outer edge thereof, the positioning member having at least one ferrule engaging member.

15 3. The sanitary gasket of claim 2 wherein the at least one ferrule engaging member extends outwardly from one of a bottom surface and a top surface of the spacing member.

20 4. The sanitary gasket of claim 3 wherein the at least one ferrule engaging member extends outwardly from each of the bottom surface and the top surface of the spacing member.

5. The sanitary gasket of claim 2 wherein the at least one ferrule engaging member comprises a plurality of discrete ferrule engaging member positioned about the outer edge of the spacing member.

5 6. The sanitary gasket of claim 2 wherein the at least one ferrule engaging member extends continuously about the outer edge of the spacing member.

7. The sanitary gasket of claim 1 wherein the spacing assembly interfacing edge is spaced apart from the inner edge of the spacing member.

10 8. The sanitary gasket of claim 1 wherein the spacing assembly interfacing edge is mechanically attached to the inner edge of the spacing member.

15 9. The sanitary gasket of claim 1 wherein the spacing assembly interfacing edge and the inner edge of the spacing member are one of adhered and co-molded together.

10. The sanitary gasket of claim 1 wherein the spacing assembly interfacing edge and the inner edge of the spacing member overlap.

20 11. The sanitary gasket of claim 1 wherein the gasket assembly further includes a pair of opposing ribs which are configured so as to interface with an opposing channel in each of two pipes.

12 13. A combination pipe and gasket assembly comprising:

- a first pipe having a ferrule face defining a channel thereon;

- a second pipe having a ferrule face defining a channel thereon, wherein the ferrule

5 faces of the first and second pipe, as well as the channels of the first and second pipes substantially correspond to each other;

- a sanitary gasket positioned between the two pipes, the sanitary gasket comprising:

10 - a spacing assembly, having a spacing member including a body having an inner edge and an outer edge;

- a gasket assembly having a spacing assembly interfacing edge associated with the inner edge of the spacing assembly,

-wherein the gasket assembly is of a softer material than the spacing assembly, such that, upon clamping, the spacing assembly controls the spacing between two pipes, and, in turn, the compression of the gasket assembly.

15 13 14. The sanitary gasket of claim 13 wherein the spacing assembly further comprises a positioning member associated with the outer edge thereof, the positioning member having at least one ferrule engaging member.

20 14 15. The sanitary gasket of claim 14 wherein the at least one ferrule engaging member extends outwardly from one of a bottom surface and a top surface of the spacing member.

15. 16. The sanitary gasket of claim 15 wherein the at least one ferrule engaging member extends outwardly from each of the bottom surface and the top surface of the spacing member.

5 16. 17. The sanitary gasket of claim 14 wherein the at least one ferrule engaging member comprises a plurality of discrete ferrule engaging member positioned about the outer edge of the spacing member.

10 17. 18. The sanitary gasket of claim 14 wherein the at least one ferrule engaging member extends continuously about the outer edge of the spacing member.

18. 19. The sanitary gasket of claim 13 wherein the spacing assembly interfacing edge is spaced apart from the inner edge of the spacing member.

15 19. 20. The sanitary gasket of claim 13 wherein the spacing assembly interfacing edge is mechanically attached to the inner edge of the spacing member.

20. 21. The sanitary gasket of claim 13 wherein the spacing assembly interfacing edge and the inner edge of the spacing member are one of adhered and co-molded together.

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21. 22. The sanitary gasket of claim 13 wherein the spacing assembly interfacing edge and the inner edge of the spacing member overlap.

22. 23. The sanitary gasket of claim 13 wherein the gasket assembly further includes a pair of opposing ribs which are configured so as to interface with an opposing channel in each of two pipes.

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23. 24. The sanitary gasket of claim 13 wherein the gasket assembly may include at least one opening extending therethrough, to, in turn, provide for leak detection.

24. 25. A sanitary gasket for use between two pipes, each having a ferrule face defining a channel thereon, the sanitary gasket comprising:

- a spacing assembly, having a spacing member including a body having an inner edge, an outer edge, a top surface and a bottom surface; and

- a gasket assembly having a spacing assembly interfacing edge, a bore interfacing edge, a top surface and a bottom surface, each of the top surface and the bottom surface including opposing ribs positioned thereon, the spacing assembly interfacing edge associated with the inner edge of the spacing assembly,

-wherein the gasket assembly is of a softer material than the spacing assembly, such that, upon clamping, the spacing assembly controls the spacing between two pipes, and, in turn, the compression of the gasket assembly.

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25. 26. The sanitary gasket of claim 25 wherein the spacing assembly and the gasket assembly are integrated into a single component.

26, 27. A sanitary gasket for use between two pipes, each having a ferrule face defining a channel thereon, the sanitary gasket comprising:

5 - a gasket assembly having a bore interfacing edge, a top surface and a bottom surface, each of the top surface and the bottom surface including opposing ribs positioned thereon, the spacing assembly interfacing edge associated with the inner edge of the spacing assembly,

- a spacing assembly comprising a plurality of plugs disposed about the gasket assembly, each of the plurality of plugs having a top surface and a bottom surface;

10 - wherein the gasket assembly is of a softer material than the spacing assembly, such that, upon clamping, the spacing assembly controls the spacing between two pipes, and, in turn, the compression of the gasket assembly.

27, 28. The sanitary gasket of claim 27 wherein the plurality of plugs are fully surrounded by the gasket assembly.

28, 29. The sanitary gasket of claim 27 wherein the plurality of plugs are positioned at a predetermined distance from the bore interfacing edge of the gasket assembly.

20 29, 30. The sanitary gasket of claim 27 wherein the plurality of plugs are substantially circular in shape.

30. ~~31.~~ The sanitary gasket of claim 27 wherein the plurality of plugs are positioned are substantially uniformly positioned about a circumference of the gasket assembly.

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